

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 EA-10 NEA-11 IO-13 ISO-00
MCT-01 HA-05 AID-05 CCO-00 FBOE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSC-05 SP-02 OC-06 OPR-02 PA-01
USSS-00 CA-01 A-01 SCS-06 OMB-01 SS-15 SY-05
PC-01 EB-08 PER-01 FS-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 /153 W
-----101598 141703Z /72

O 141601Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9669
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE POUCH
AMCONSUL BUKAVU POUCH
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LISBON IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE
USLO PEKING IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY RABAT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE
US MISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1524
US MISSION NATO IMMEDIATE 136
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER//ECJ4/7, ECJ2-T IMMEDIATE
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
USICA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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DEPT ALSO FOR A/SY/OPS/FO/AF

DEPT PASSSPEACE CORPS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MOPS, PINS, CASC, CG

SUBJECT: SHABA ATTACK: CURRENT ASSESSMENT

REF: A) KINSHASA 4748, B) STATE 122725, C) KINSHASA 4740,
D) LUBUMBASHI 456, E) LUBUMBASHI 459, F) LUBUMBASHI 460,
G) LUBUMBASHI RYQM ALL NOTAL

1. SUMMARY: MILITARY SITUATION KOLWEZI IN SHABA PROVINCE REMAINS CONFUSED. GOVT FORCES HAVE NOT SUCCEEDED IN RETAKING EITHER KOLWEZI AIRPORT OR THE LARGE PORTION OF KOLWEZI TOWN WHICH SINCE MAY 13 HAS BEEN IN HANDS OF INVADING EX-KATANGAN GENDARMES. THERE ARE NO REPORTS OF ANY HARM TO AMERICAN CITIZENS OTHER THAN SLIGHT INJURIES SUSTAINED BY CHILD DEPENDENT OF CIS EMPLOYEE REPORTED REF C. IT SEEMS INCREASINGLY UNLIKELY THAT ATTACK WAS INTENDED AS MERE CROSS-BORDER RAID; REPORTS BEING RECEIVED HERE MAKE KOLWEZI OPERATION LOOK LIKE ANOTHER SERIOUS ATTEMPT TO TOPPLE MOBUTU REGIME. EMBASSY BELIEVES DEPT'S ESTABLISHMENT OF WORKING GROUP OR TASK FORCE JUSTIFIED. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY HAS BEEN RECEIVING REPORTS FROM CONSULATE LUBUMBASHI (EGG. REFS D, E, F, AND G), HAS BEEN GIVEN COPIES OF THREE EXTENSIVE REPORTS FROM BELGIAN CONGEN LUBUMBASHI, AND HAS BEEN PASSED MESSAGE FROM FRENCH CONGEN LUBUMBASHI. IN ADDITION, EMBASSY IS IN CONTACT WITH CIS CONSTRUCTION CAMP KOLWEZI, HAS HEARD INDIRECTLY FROM AMERICAN MISSIONARIES AT KOLWEZI, AND HAS RECEIVED SEVERAL BRIEFINGS FROM ZAIRIAN DEPT. OF DEFENSE
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KINSHASA (DDN) AS WELL AS FROM PRESIDENT (REF A) AND ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER.

3. TAKEN TOGETHER, THESE REPORTS INDICATE A MORE SERIOUS SITUATION THAN THAT DESCRIBED TO U.S., CHINESE, FRENCH, AND U.K. CHIEFS OF MISSION BY PRESIDENT MOBUTU AFTERNOON OF MAY 13 (REF A). ALTHOUGH MOBUTU TOLD US THAT FAZ HAD SUCCEEDED IN RETAKING FAZ HEADQUARTERS AND GECAMINES HOSPITAL BY MID-DAY OF MAY 13, GECAMINES AND OTHER SOURCES INDICATE THAT VIRTUALLY ENTIRE TOWN WAS STILL IN REBEL HANDS VERY LATE IN AFTERNOON OF THAT DAY. DDN REPORTS THAT PANHARD ARMORED CARS SENT TO RELIEVE KOLWEZI AIRFIELD WERE DESTROYED ENROUTE, APPARENTLY BY MINES, AND THAT KOLWEZI AMMUNITION DUMP WAS BLOWN UP BY INVADERS. CONSULATE LUBUMBASHI INDICATES AT LEAST SOME PANHARDS ARE IN REBEL HANDS. DDN REPORTS THAT COMBAT CONTINUED NIGHT MAY 13-14.

4. ACCORDING TO BELGIAN CONGEN LUBUMBASHI, REBELS CLAIMED TO HAVE BEEN ENROUTE FOR 40 DAYS. AFTER OCCUPYING KOLWEZI TOWN AND BELGIAN SCHOOL THERE, THEY PILLAGED STORES, ESPECIALLY SEEKING FOOD. BELGIAN CONGEN REPORTS THE ZAIRIAN MILITARY COMMANDER, COLONEL TSASSA, AND OTHER AUTHORITIES AT LUBUMBASHI APPEARED "BEWILDERED" IN FACE OF SITUATION.

5. THERE ARE NO REPORTS OF ANY INJURIES TO AMERICAN CITIZENS OTHER THAN THE SLIGHT INJURY SUSTAINED BY DEPDENT OF A CIS

EMPLOYEE AT KOLWEZI REPORTED REF C. HOWEVER, CIS AS YET HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO CONTACT ALL THEIR EMPLOYEES IN KOLWEZI AREA. MOREOVER, THERE ARE UNCONFIRMED REPORTS THAT SEVEN "EUROPEANS" HAVE BEEN KIDNAPPED BY REBEL FORCES. CONSULATE LUBUMBASHI SUGGESTS THAT REBELS MAY BE ROUNDING UP EXPATRIATES TO PLACE THEM TO SAFEHAVEN. BELGIAN CONGEN REPORTS REBELS HAVE SHOWN NO HOSTILITY TOWARD WHITES AND NO BELGIAN CITIZENS HAVE BEEN HARMED. HOWEVER, UNTIL SITUATION CLEARER, WE CANNOT RULE OUT POSSIBILITY THAT INVADERS WILL DECIDE TO MAKE HOSTAGES OF EXPATRIATE COMMUNITY THERE.

6. VOICE OF ZAIRE BROADCAST FIRST PUBLIC NEWS OF INVASION AT 1330 LOCAL TIME, SUNDAY MAY 14. ACCORDING TO GOZ SPOKESMAN, WHO ATTRIBUTED INFORMATION TO MOBUTU, APPROXIMATELY 4,000 MEN HAVE INFILTRATED SHABA WITH BACKING FROM USSR, CUBA, LIBYA, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND ALGERIA. HE SAID GOZ WILL REQUEST AID TODAY FROM U.S., BELGIUM, FRANCE, MOROCCO AND THE PRC. SPOKESMAN ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT ATTACK ON TOWN OF MUTSHATSHA, ALONG RAILROAD LINE WEST OF KOLWEZI, WAS REPULSED BY FAZ TROOPS SUNDAY MORNING.

7. DDN CONCERNED BY REPORTS OF CONCENTRATIONS OTHER KATANGAN FORCES ON ANGOLAN AND ZAMBIAN SIDE OF FRONTIER FROM DILOLO TO SAKANIA. ATTACK ON MUTSHATSHA HAS BEEN CONFIRMED BY PRESIDENT, AND KATANGANS MAY WELL JUDGE THAT THIS IS TIME FOR ATTACKS ALSO AGAINST SUCH POINTS AS KASAJI TO SECURE COMMUNICATIONS/RESUPPLY ROUTE THROUGH DILOLO.

8. IN LIGHT OF ABOVE, ESTABLISHMENT OF DEPARTMENTAL TASK FORCE OR WORK GROUP SEEMS JUSTIFIED (REF B). EMBASSY PLANS BEGIN DAILY SITREP MAY 15.

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